

Chapter Chair Chat, January 2023

What do you think the Santa Lucia Chapter's priorities should be in 2023? We want to hear from you!

By Carole Mintzer, Chapter Chair

Happy New Year! I hope you have good things to look forward to as you put another calendar on the wall, or notice the year change on your phone's calendar. The end-of-year holidays always provide a good time for reflection and celebration as we think about our priorities for the new year.



A quick review of how our chapter spent 2022 shows that we held six General Meetings over Zoom, with topics including Mental Health and the Climate Crisis, Recycling and Reducing the Use of Plastic, and The Importance of Being Oak Trees. Attendance was good and the Zoom format allowed us to invite speakers from outside SLO County. Our Political Committee endorsed eleven candidates and all eleven were elected. Our Outings leaders organized over thirty walks and hikes to help people enjoy the outdoors. Our Conservation Committee continues to speak out for the protection of open space, the preservation of oak trees, maintaining sustainable water supplies, and clean energy. Our volunteers are supporting efforts to preserve and protect 30% of California's land and water by 2030. We worked with the Santa Barbara-Ventura Chapter to oppose Exxon's plan to truck oil across San Luis Obispo County – and succeeded in stopping this egregious plan.

So what's coming up in 2023? We are looking forward to publication of the draft designation documents by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary. After years of effort, we are so, so close to having this vital protection of the ocean off our coast. We expect a court decision -- but probably not the last one -- on whether off-highway vehicles will be able to continue desecrating the Oceano Dunes and we will need to make sure the dunes can recover and be a safe place for everyone. We will be asking you to support efforts to stop the bulldozing of a major oak woodland in Nipomo. We will continue supporting the preservation of lands surrounding the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant. We also will be gathering information about the renewable energy projects proposed for the Central Coast and collaborating within the Sierra Club to speak out about any potential impacts on the environment from these important efforts to address climate change.

Which brings me to thoughts of what our priorities should be in 2023 and how you can help. When the Chapter Executive Committee met in December, we came up with ideas for Chapter priorities for this new year. Here's a list of some of the ideas:

- Increase our volunteer base; spread the workload more evenly away from just a few volunteers
- Have more in-person meetings or events
- Have a fundraiser
- Improve fundraising
- Build out our Social Justice Committee
- Continue to protect Oceano Dunes
- Continue to support designation of the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary
- Continue to support closure of Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant and protection of the surrounding lands
- Support efforts to maintain the San Luis Obispo Urban Forest to maintain biodiversity
- Oppose efforts to bulldoze thousands of oak trees for very little affordable housing in Nipomo
- Support state goals for electric vehicle ownership
- Support efforts to protect and preserve 30% of our land and water by 2030.
- Learn and speak about mitigation efforts as renewable energy projects are developed

And now, I'd love to hear from you! What do you think our priorities should be this year? Take this [short survey](#) and provide your ideas. You can endorse some of the ideas above or write in ideas we haven't thought of.

Thank you and Happy New Year!

Carole